

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE TECHNICIAN (WILDLIFE)
GS-404-03/04/05

SJ 416GS
(April 2006)

INTRODUCTION

This position is located within the Wildlife Services (WS) Program of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The assignment involves the performance of duties relating to wildlife management, use of control techniques aimed at managing wildlife damage, and wildlife disease sampling. Managing wildlife damage relates particularly to that of beavers flooding roads and property, birds causing damage to property, predators preying on threatened and endangered species and livestock, wildlife disease surveillance when conflicts cause economic, public health or agricultural concern, and other similar projects. The incumbent will work with other technicians and wildlife biologists from State and Federal agencies and non-governmental organizations. The work is primarily concerned with WS operations relating to the cessation, alleviation or mitigation of problems created by aquatic rodents, birds and other animals in urban or rural environments, and wildlife disease surveillance.

DUTIES

Serves as a member of the WS workforce engaged in wildlife damage management operations.

Incumbent will be required to collect biological samples from birds and the environment.

Follow instructions in wildlife disease (avian influenza) surveillance plans as directed by Supervisor.

Incumbent will be required to be familiar with and know how to use various devices, chemicals, tools, bird and mammal traps and nets, firearms and related equipment utilized in mammal and bird damage management operations.

Must be able to correctly identify current, and forecast future damage problems, and relate them to depredating species and determine/select the most effective means of control. Must be able to correctly identify current, and forecast future, migratory bird movements to plan capture and sampling efforts.

Must be highly skilled in the use of various WS damage management methods and procedures including the use of firearms and various avian and mammalian traps. Damage management methods utilized may include the use of snares, traps, nets, calling, shooting or den hunting.

Must be able to discuss Endangered Species concepts, and be familiar with the ranges of the various threatened and endangered species that might come in conflict with any phase of WS programs.

Responsible for, and may instruct others in, the maintenance, repair and safekeeping of tools, supplies and equipment issued. When using registered pesticides, investigational new animal drugs, or controlled substances, must maintain records pursuant to the State Pesticide statutes, Drug Enforcement Agency and Board of Pharmacy statutes and Environmental Protection Agency pesticide use restriction.

Must be able to identify birds and mammals by sight, sound, call, tracks, type of depredation or damage present, examine other appropriate evidence and correctly identify such damage situations and relate them to the depredating species.

Incumbent may be required to serve as instructor and conduct demonstrations and training for cooperators or other interested groups on WS damage management methods and wildlife disease (avian influenza) surveillance, procedures, and program objectives. This may include preliminary instruction and training of new personnel on WS equipment, devices, chemicals, firearms, etc., reporting procedures, field responsibilities and other technical aspects of the program.

Prepares and submits routine and special reports regarding daily, weekly or monthly activities, observations, events and other relevant data collected.

Will be required to pass Restricted Use Pesticide Applicator examination, as required of persons who use restricted-use pesticides within 90 days of appointment.

Must demonstrate a respect for safety in all operations, including the operation of motor vehicles, firearms, rocket nets, chemical methods, control devices, and equipment.

Must have a valid State Motor Vehicle Operator's or Commercial License, as appropriate. Operation of Government-owned or leased vehicles is required.

FACTORS

KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION

Knowledge of the habits, characteristics and habitats occupied by a wide variety of avian and mammalian species that are, or may become, a threat in terms of economic interests, public health aspects or human and/or livestock safety.

Knowledge of, and the ability to interpret and apply, local, State and Federal policies, regulations, laws and ordinances that affect not only wildlife damage management procedures but also other wildlife species that are usually beneficial.

Knowledge of wildlife damage management techniques and wildlife disease sampling approaches to carry out a full range of common technical duties.

Knowledge of the principles of biological sciences, technical methods and procedures of assigned

tasks.

Knowledge of toxic material application procedures. Incumbent may be required to complete appropriate Certified Applicators examination, as required by Federal and/or State laws.

SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

The incumbent works under the general supervision of the District Supervisor or State Director. Incumbent is given considerable latitude in carrying out delegated responsibilities and is expected to exercise individual initiative and independent judgment determining courses of action, work priorities or operational needs. The supervisor may be located a considerable distance and time away from work locations and may not always immediately be available for consultation. Work is reviewed primarily through personal visits, consultations, accomplishments met, reports and records. Controversial items, highly sensitive issues or critical problems which may have a detrimental impact on WS operations will be reported and discussed with the supervisor.

GUIDELINES

Guidelines include a variety of local, State and Federal laws, regulations or ordinances regarding wildlife damage management activities and wildlife disease sampling. Judgment is required in the selection and adaptation of appropriate guideline for each situation encountered by the incumbent.

COMPLEXITY

The work involves the performance of a broad range of duties relating to the use of control techniques, including the handling of toxic materials aimed at managing wildlife damage, and collection of high quality biological specimens for disease analysis.

SCOPE AND EFFECT

The purpose of the work is to provide assistance in maintaining proper control strategies in wildlife management and collection of biological specimens. The incumbent's work is critical to the overall effectiveness of the WS program and avian influenza surveillance activities.

PERSONAL CONTACTS

Contacts are with members of the general public, including citizen groups and non-governmental organizations, associations, farmers, ranchers, public land managers and various local, State and Federal agencies. Contacts may also include individuals who do not understand or support the WS program.

PURPOSE OF CONTACTS

The purpose of contacts is to negotiate agreements, provide technical assistance in operational

control, cooperate in sample collection activities and to promote the WS program and its accomplishments.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Work requires physical exertion such as walking over rough, uneven or rocky surfaces, bending, crouching, stooping and stretching. Agility and dexterity are required.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Incumbent spends a considerable amount of time outdoors. The terrain may be uneven, rocky or in vegetation. Work locations may be remote. There may be exposure to extremes of weather and temperature. The incumbent may be also exposed to toxic chemicals.